United Nations E/CN.6/2005/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 December 2004

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-ninth session
28 February-11 March 2005
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system

Measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, with an assessment of progress made on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in response to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 48/4 and General Assembly resolution 59/168, outlines achievements and good practices in United Nations entities in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Based on inputs received from United Nations entities, the report analyses efforts made by the United Nations system to support implementation at national level. The report contains recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women on enhancing implementation.

* E/CN.6/2005/1.

04-64247 (E) 070205

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–5	3
II.	Achievements in implementation	6–57	4
	A. Policy and strategy development	6–7	4
	B. Institutional arrangements	8–17	5
	C. Programme and operational activities	18–47	6
	D. Entities specialized in the promotion of gender equality	48–52	14
	E. Inter-agency collaboration	53–57	15
III.	Obstacles and challenges	58–64	16
IV.	Conclusions and recommendations	65–67	17

I. Introduction

1. The Beijing Declaration, adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, urged the United Nations system to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Platform for Action emphasized that, in order to ensure effective implementation and enhance the work for the advancement of women at the national, subregional/regional and international levels, the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of gender mainstreaming, inter alia, in the monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes; and that responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the Platform for Action and the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system must rest at the highest levels. The regional commissions of the United Nations were requested to promote and assist the pertinent national institutions in monitoring and implementing the global Platform for Action within their mandates.

2. In the outcome of its twenty-third special session (General Assembly resolution S-23/3, annex), the General Assembly called upon organizations of the United Nations system, along with other actors, to support government efforts and, where appropriate, develop complementary programmes of their own to achieve full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action. The United Nations system was further requested to assist Governments, at their request, in incorporating a gender perspective into national development planning, building institutional capacity, developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans as well as to support non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially women's organizations, to build their capacity to advocate for, implement, assess and follow up on the Platform for Action.

3. In its resolution 59/168, the General Assembly called upon entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to continue to take effective action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session. It affirmed that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives, the United Nations system should continue to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspectives, including through the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser of Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender units, focal points and gender specialists, and with the active support of all United Nations bodies, and ensuring that all United Nations personnel, especially in the field, receive training on gender perspectives in their work, including gender impact analysis, and that appropriate follow-up is provided.

4. In its resolution 48/4, the Commission on the Status of Women requested the Secretary-General to include an assessment of the implementation of that resolution in his report to the forty-ninth session of the Commission. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/168, requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key

achievements, lessons learned and best practices and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system.

5. The present report, submitted in response to those resolutions, outlines achievements and good practices in United Nations entities in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including through adopting gender-sensitive policies and strategies, building capacity of staff and developing gender-sensitive tools and methodologies in support of implementation at the national level. It highlights remaining gaps and challenges. The report, which is based on inputs received from United Nations entities, does not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview, but rather to give illustrative examples from entities of the United Nations system.[1] It contains recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women on enhancing the implementation within the United Nations system.

II. Achievements in implementation

A. Policy and strategy development

6. Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, the majority of United Nations entities have developed policies on gender equality and the advancement of women. While many of these policies were based on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a renewed momentum was created by the adoption of the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2000. Entities also emphasized that Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming, the Millennium Declaration (2000) and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security (2000) facilitated further progress. In 2001-2002, the World Food Programme (WFP) undertook an intensive review and evaluation of its policy commitments to women (1996-2001) and, on the basis of the lessons learned, developed its current gender policy (2003-2007). Building on lessons learned in the implementation of the strategy of the integration of women in the maritime sector (1988), the Action Programme for Equal Opportunities and Advancement of Women in the Maritime Sector (1997-2001) was adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

7. During the last decade, there has been a shift in many United Nations entities towards a more comprehensive approach to achieving gender equality, based on the gender mainstreaming strategy, which requires the adoption of gender-sensitive policies, procedures and programming. In July 2004, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance launched its Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan to guide efforts to mainstream gender perspectives into humanitarian advocacy and information management, policy development, coordination of humanitarian response and resource mobilization. In 2002, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) adopted a gender mainstreaming strategy that emphasized: the establishment of a network of gender focal points for all units; the identification of training requirements; attention to gender perspectives in meeting agendas, project screening, individual and team work plans; as well as the monitoring of progress. The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that all its regional offices had adopted gender equality policies and gender

mainstreaming strategies, the most recent being the policy and strategy of the Asian region (2004-2007), which contains detailed indicators and targets and an approved budget for implementation. Similarly, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is currently developing a gender mainstreaming policy, to be introduced in the first quarter of 2005. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) undertook a pilot test on gender and age methodology in 14 countries to provide the basis for the formulation of the organization's Gender Equality Policy.

B. Institutional arrangements

8. Entities developed institutional mechanisms to facilitate effective implementation. Strategic mechanisms include: gender specialist resources, such as gender units and gender focal points; capacity-building of staff; the development and use of methodologies and tools; and monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms.

9. A variety of gender specialist resources have been developed within entities. These resources play a significant role in supporting gender mainstreaming within organizations and promote interorganizational exchange of experiences and good practices through networking. The Women in Habitat Programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), which had been in operation since 1991, was merged with the Gender Policy Unit in 1999 to form the current Gender Mainstreaming Unit. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) formed a gender task force to examine ways to improve its approach to gender equality. In 2003, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) established its Centre for Women.

10. Several entities were supported by networks of gender focal points. For example, the Gender Programme Team at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is supported by a global "Gender Knowledge Network", which consists of 134 UNDP gender focal points in country offices and 20 gender specialists working as United Nations Volunteers. Similarly, the network of gender focal points of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is active at 90 of the 200 field missions and has established a working group on gender issues at headquarters. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations appointed a gender adviser at Headquarters and established gender adviser positions in 10 of 17 peacekeeping operations, including the advance mission in the Sudan, for which the Department of Political Affairs retains the lead.

11. A majority of United Nations entities have developed and organized gender sensitization training for staff and partners at both headquarters and in the field. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) organized its first gender training workshop for gender focal points stationed at headquarters and in field offices in January 2004. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) carried out several gender mainstreaming capacity-building workshops for staff at headquarters. In building institutional capacity and promoting organizational transformation, UNDP trained senior managers to ensure dedicated gender expertise in teams. WFP mainstreamed its "Enhanced

Commitments to Women" programme into other corporate training programmes. IMO carried out a series of workshops on gender-planning methodology.

12. Other entities have also taken steps to build institutional capacity. For example, the Department for Disarmament Affairs organized a panel discussion entitled "Making Disarmament More Effective: Men and Women Working Together". In May 2004, the Department of Political Affairs organized a meeting of field presences, at which Special Representatives of the Secretary-General discussed progress and challenges in mainstreaming gender perspectives into their activities.

13. To support the effectiveness of gender capacity-building programmes, entities developed a variety of methodologies and tools. Several entities adopted specific methodologies and tools on gender mainstreaming. For instance, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Mine Action Service and other members of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Group on Mine Action have developed guidelines for integrating gender perspectives into mine action programmes. A recent initiative by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is the Gender Resource Package for peacekeeping operations, developed to facilitate training of both uniformed and civilian peacekeeping personnel.

14. Efforts were also made to integrate gender perspectives into existing tools. For example, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) ensured that gender perspectives were reflected in its Programme Policy and Procedures Manual and Programme Process Training Manual. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WFP worked together to develop guidelines that integrate gender analysis into emergency and rehabilitation programmes.

15. A number of entities have taken steps to incorporate gender perspectives into results-based planning and budgeting, with a view to facilitating monitoring and evaluation of gender-specific programme activities and establishing accountability. Within the Secretariat, attention to gender perspectives has been included in the instructions prepared by the Department of Management for programme budgets, beginning with the biennium 2000-2001. In the report of the Secretary-General on programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/59/69), the assessment of gender equality by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) was discussed. Out of 26 programmes, eight contained expected accomplishments referring to the gender dimension of their work in all their subprogrammes and nine programmes contained accomplishments in some of their subprogrammes. Of 133 subprogrammes, 39 per cent included an explicit reference to gender issues in at least one expected accomplishment. The programme budgets of the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the biennium 2004-2005 and 2006-2007, for example, include an expected accomplishment related to gender mainstreaming under each of its subprogrammes.

16. Several entities used other mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation, such as internal surveys, reviews, assessments, audits and annual reports. ILO, for example, has conducted 20 participatory gender audits of its programmes at headquarters and in the regions since 2001, and is now piloting gender audits for its constituents (Governments, employers' organizations and trade unions). A baseline survey carried out by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2003 indicated that 80 per cent of the Fund's country strategy and opportunities papers addressed gender issues, and 70 per cent of annual work plans and budgets for the Fund's projects allocated human and financial

resources for gender-related activities. The results-oriented annual reports of 2001 and 2002 indicated increased interventions by UNDP in promoting gender equality, both in terms of the number of countries reporting and the scope of activities. In 2004, UN-Habitat made gender impact assessment an integral part of project planning, management and evaluation, stipulating that all project proposals for funding should explain how women's and men's priorities will be addressed. Board members of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) monitor the incorporation of gender perspectives into the work of the Institute, thereby providing a strong incentive for research coordinators to raise gender issues in their respective areas.

17. Several entities noted that political will and accountability, in particular at the highest levels of an entity, are important for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session. Some entities emphasized the importance of integrating gender mainstreaming into job descriptions and work plans and introduced gender mainstreaming performance into staff appraisals. For example, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs developed guidance for humanitarian coordinators on their role and responsibilities in relation to gender mainstreaming in country level activities.

C. Programme and operational activities

18. Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, gender equality is increasingly being incorporated into programme and operational activities of the United Nations system. Progress, although uneven, has been made in the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern. Gender dimensions have been increasingly recognized in peace and security, humanitarian and reconstruction work as well as in relation to information and communication technologies (ICT), HIV/AIDS and trafficking.

19. A broad range of programme activities have been carried out by United Nations entities, at both the headquarters and field levels. Activities have included support to legislative change, policy development and planning and implementation of programmes. Entities have supported building of national capacity to integrate gender perspectives into national policies and programmes through training and provision of guidelines and handbooks, as well as technical assistance. Support has been provided to women's participation in policy and decision-making processes. Entities have supported government efforts aimed at awareness-raising, including mobilization of public opinion, through advocacy, gender-specific research, conferences, workshops, seminars, training, compilation and dissemination of sex disaggregated statistics and sharing and disseminating of information. Entities have also supported direct assistance to groups with special challenges.

20. Entities have made considerable efforts to incorporate gender perspectives in their programme support to Governments at the national level. For example, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), working with Governments, has established national mechanisms to monitor and reduce gender-based violence. UNDP assisted over 40 countries in starting up gender-sensitive budgeting initiatives. In Mongolia, UNDP promoted a national effort to review budgets, macroeconomic policies and poverty reduction strategy papers from a gender perspective. Gender specialist resources in a number of peacekeeping operations,

including the missions in Kosovo (the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) and Afghanistan (the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan), have played an important role in providing technical inputs and facilitating the incorporation of gender perspectives in the drafting of new constitutions and legislation as well as the development of specific legislation on gender issues.

21. A number of entities have advocated gender equality and the advancement of women in a variety of ways. United Nations entities, including UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), have played an important role in advocating gender equality in the common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes as well as in work on the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategy papers, including through the establishment of gender theme groups. In February 2004, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) launched a new collaborative initiative: the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, with four specific goals: (a) to raise the visibility of issues related to women, girls and AIDS; (b) to catalyse action to address those issues; (c) to facilitate collaboration at all levels; and (d) to scale up action that will lead to concrete, measurable improvements in the lives of women and girls.[2] Within its initiative for the industrial rehabilitation and reconstruction of post-crisis countries, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) promoted women entrepreneurship development in such countries as Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq and the Sudan.

22. UNAIDS, in collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), carried out an initiative on gender-sensitive HIV prevention for young adolescents (10-14 years old), focusing specifically on the socialization process that has such an impact on the vulnerability of girls to HIV. OHCHR supported the development of legislation on women's rights, including on the elimination of discrimination, domestic violence, trafficking and political participation, and provided training to NGOs working on women's human rights. In its training activities in the area of peace and security, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs addressed gender issues in peace support programmes and in conflict-sensitive development.

23. Several entities specifically advocated for women's participation in policy and decision-making processes. The Department for Disarmament Affairs developed a comprehensive database of female experts and women's organizations specialized in security and disarmament matters, with a view to increasing women's participation in conferences and other events. The Office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Southern Lebanon highlighted the benefits of involving women in mine-awareness campaigns and encouraged their active participation. IMO provided access for women to specialized maritime training through the provision of fellowship funding in order to: integrate women into mainstream maritime activities; increase their employment in the sector; and increase the percentage of women at the senior management level.

24. The United Nations regional commissions played a critical role in supporting the efforts of Member States in the different regions. In particular, they have provided support to strengthen national machineries for the advancement of women.

For example, ESCWA encouraged Member States in the region to establish permanent national gender machineries and assisted Governments in formulating regional and national strategies, plans and programmes for the empowerment and advancement of women. To assist Member States in monitoring and evaluating progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Economic Commission for Africa developed a variety of tools, such as monitoring and evaluation tools for gender mainstreaming currently used by 18 countries in the region. The Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific organized a regional meeting of national machineries, in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Korea, which adopted a set of recommendations to guide countries in their follow-up actions. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean carried out a project on capacity-building of national machineries for governance. The regional commissions also organized regional preparatory conferences for the 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

25. Technical assistance programmes specifically targeting women and girls provided by the United Nations system covered a broad range of issues. Some of these activities were directed at the economic empowerment of women, while others specifically targeted women at risk. For example, IFAD supported women's microenterprise development and access to rural financial services. Community-based pre-school facilities set up by the United Nations Volunteers in Niger decreased burdens for women and girls and increased school attendance rates for girls as well as opportunities for women to engage in productive activities. UNIDO organized managerial and technical skills development programmes for women entrepreneurs engaged in food processing and textile sectors.

26. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) implemented programmes for women at risk in the context of the release of mercury and the threat of persistent organic pollutants. Through its Special Programme for Food Security, FAO implemented projects in 100 countries, providing assistance to war widows in Iraq in vegetable production, backyard poultry farming and the raising of small ruminants. In Viet Nam, the United Nations Volunteers promoted increased income-generating opportunities of disadvantaged youth, especially girls. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute developed a programme on trafficking in minors and young women from Nigeria into Italy for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The programme, which was conceived as a "women for women" project, was carried out by local NGOs in Nigeria. In response to the marked increase in the number of women with cancer (cervical, breast and ovarian), the IAEA programme of action on cancer treatment aimed at early detection of the incidence of cancer in women as well as the provision of therapeutic strategies and awareness-raising activities.

27. Starting in 1995, UNFPA began to raise the issue of the harmful effects of female genital mutilation/cutting to the Sabiny Elder's Association and clan leaders in the Kapchorwa district of Uganda. In two years, the practice declined by 36 per cent. In Mali, Ecuador, Jamaica and Yemen, the United Nations Volunteers conducted workshops for women on their roles in utilization and protection of the environment. UNHCR advocated the representation and active participation of refugee and displaced women in peace processes in Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia.

28. United Nations entities provided: capacity-building activities, awareness raising and training workshops targeting a wide group of actors, including staff in ministries of finance and planning, statisticians, national accountants, policy analysts, national AIDS Councils, health-care providers and managers, peacekeepers, judiciary and law enforcement personnel, media, publishers, men's groups, men in the armed forces, academics, women's groups and networks and faith-based organizations. UNRWA created 64 women's programme centres that offered awareness-raising sessions in refugee camps on issues such as health, HIV/AIDS, poverty, environment and gender equality. The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) provided women's organizations with advice and training and assisted them in establishing networks and forums for discussion and consensus building on gender policy for governmental institutions. UNFPA carried out workshops on sexual and reproductive health and gender equality for 15,000 men in the armed forces in Paraguay. IMO carried out sensitization seminars in partnership with several academic institutions, including the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, in order to enhance the visibility and impact of women in the maritime industry.

29. A large number of tools and methodologies were developed and used during the training. UNICEF supported the development of a manual on gender-sensitive learning materials for use by textbook publishers and writers in Indonesia. To facilitate integration of gender perspectives, UNFPA developed and piloted step-by-step guidelines for health-care providers and managers in health clinics on gender-based violence, including childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. The Economic Commission for Africa is developing a guidebook for integrating gender perspectives and household-level production into poverty reduction strategies in Africa, with a view to improving the skills of statisticians, national accountants and policy analysts in the collection, analysis and integration of data disaggregated by sex into national planning instruments. UNESCO prepared guidelines for the preparation of gender-responsive "Education for All" plans and distributed them widely in the Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions. WHO developed manuals for health workers and educators to work with adolescent males through reflections on masculinity and gender relations on various health issues.

30. Several entities supported States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in their reporting and implementation obligations under the Convention. For example, the United Nations Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) provided technical assistance in the preparation and submission of its first report.

31. To raise awareness on gender equality among a wide range of development actors, United Nations entities conducted conferences, workshops and seminars for audiences ranging from high-level Government and United Nations officials to members of civil society, including women's organizations. Specific events were devoted to gender equality. UNEP organized a consultative seminar for women in 2004 that addressed emerging issues in the context of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. In 1998, UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNHCR and UNIFEM jointly organized an international consultation on women's land and property rights in conflicts and reconstruction in Kigali, Rwanda. UNESCO organized, in collaboration with the Tajik authorities, a conference on intercultural dialogue in Central Asia, which highlighted women's active role in building and nurturing

intercultural dialogue and peace in Central Asia. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) organized the second Conference on Women in Meteorology and Hydrology in March 2003.

32. Gender perspectives were also incorporated into other events. The Department for Disarmament Affairs integrated gender perspectives into conferences on illicit trade and small arms and light weapons, for example in a conference in Egypt in 2003, which devoted a significant segment to women and peace and security in a disarmament context. The Financing for Development Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs included a presentation on the impact of microfinance services on poor clients and gender equality in one of its multi-stakeholder consultations on the Monterrey Consensus in Mali in 2004.

33. National commitments to the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals and to tracking progress toward gender equality has increased the focus of United Nations entities on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis as well as gender-sensitive indicators. The Economic Commission for Europe assisted Member States in Central Asia in strengthening the capacity of their statistical offices and improving the dialogue between users and producers of data. The Economic Commission for Africa developed the African Gender and Development Index, which measures the gap between the status of women and men and assesses progress made by Governments in implementing their gender policies. UNICEF has taken the lead role in developing new indicators in the area of child protection, with a focus on preventing early marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting. UNRWA developed reporting forms that would facilitate the collection of sex-disaggregated data.

34. Entities developed comprehensive statistical databases with data disaggregated by sex, such as the databases developed by the World Bank for the Latin American and Caribbean region and by UNDP, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe, for the European region. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean developed an integrated system of gender indicators with access to 22 country profiles, for example on population, fertility, household and family, education, employment and income, poverty, health and political participation.[3]

35. The importance of building capacity for the collection, use and analysis of data disaggregated by sex was emphasized in several entities. FAO carried out training of national agricultural statisticians on the collection of data on the contribution of women and men to agricultural and rural development. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, organized workshops to highlight the importance of social and gender statistics, in particular on monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals.

36. UNDP reported that support by entities to the collection and analysis of data at the country level has contributed to the development of more gender-sensitive common country assessments and UNDAFs; poverty reduction strategy papers, the reports on the Millennium Development Goals and national human development reports. In addition, the joint 2004 report of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on progress in implementation of the poverty reduction strategy papers revealed that data disaggregated by sex and social group had become more commonly used in monitoring the implementation of poverty reduction strategies, though there is a need to improve data quality. Further efforts are required to ensure

access to sex disaggregated statistics and indicators for areas such as poverty, energy, water, HIV/AIDS, ICT and economics.

37. Many entities have conducted research and prepared reports that specifically focus on women and girls and incorporate gender perspectives into mainstream documentation and research. The United Nations University prepared studies on women and children in post-conflict peacebuilding, trafficking in women and girls and women in natural resources management. It also made efforts to incorporate gender perspectives into research projects on inequality and social structures in economies in transition, and refugees and forced displacement.

38. An increasing body of gender-related research in various sector areas is available. In 2004, UNEP produced a publication entitled *Women and the Environment*, which demonstrated the value of involving women in environmental policy-making and provided detailed guidelines on gender mainstreaming in water management, preservation of biodiversity and combating desertification. On the basis of the International Crime Victim Survey, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute carried out comparative research on gender-based violence in more than 70 countries. The Economic Commission for Europe prepared country profiles on the housing sector, including an analysis of the impact of inadequate settlement conditions on women, in particular female headed households and single mothers. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean prepared a position document, "Roads towards Gender Equality", which examined the social and economic factors that impact on women's access to, use and control over productive resources and make it difficult for women to enter the labour market and earn income. The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO conducted a survey on the role of Palestinian women in the floriculture industry (1998), which assessed the extent to which gender-specific factors determine how Palestinian women perceive and articulate their development needs and participate in development activities. The Office of Legal Affairs issued an appeal entitled "Multilateral Treaty Framework: An Invitation to Universal Participation, Rights of Women and Children".

39. WHO set up a Sexual Violence Research Initiative with the objective of building an experienced and committed network of researchers, policy makers, activists and others to ensure that sexual violence is addressed from a multidisciplinary and multicultural perspective.

40. ILO incorporated gender perspectives into the *World Employment Report*. Few other entities reported on having incorporated gender perspectives into high-profile reports. The magazine *Africa Renewal*, published by the Department of Public Information, included articles on the advancement of women in Africa.

41. The network of United Nations information centres played an important role at the regional and national levels in translating materials into local languages, promoting major United Nations publications on women and disseminating information to the media. It also provided crucial media and information assistance to the United Nations system during the annual observance of International Women's Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

42. The Department of Public Information raised awareness of gender equality and the empowerment of women through innovative print, online and broadcast

products. The interactive Cyberschoolbus web pages for International Women's Day enabled young men and women to showcase women and girls who have inspired them. Special television documentaries, produced for young audiences by the United Nations Works Programme, drew attention to the plight of young indigenous women and women victims of landmines. The Department also incorporated gender perspectives in press material and messages for major conferences and summits, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the International Year of Fresh Water, the World Summit on the Information Society, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the annual sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

43. A large number of entities used media campaigns and ICT to promote gender equality and the advancement of women. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia used media campaigns to raise gender awareness and improve the image of women in society. The Integrated Regional Information Network, an independent humanitarian news service operated under the aegis of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which covers 46 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and eight countries in central Asia, regularly carried stories on women and issues from a gender perspective.[4] The field offices of OHCHR used radio and television to raise awareness about women's rights, including violence against women. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management developed a peacebuilding portal, an online interactive web site containing 200 profiles of organizations working primarily on women and gender in peacebuilding in sub-Saharan Africa. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) launched a new web page in October 2003 to draw attention to gender and intellectual property activities.

44. A number of trust funds have been established within United Nations entities to support activities aiming at gender equality. For example, the Trust Fund for Gender Mainstreaming in the World Bank, with grants from the Governments of Norway and the Netherlands, supported many innovative activities, including providing for the different needs of men and women in the post-conflict reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and targeting high-risk male groups in the HIV/AIDS prevention project in Senegal, the Gambia and Burkina Faso. In 2003, ILO launched the Gender Equality Partnership Fund specifically to assist constituents in over 25 countries in the implementation of ILO's shared policy objective on gender equality.

45. The IMF reported that in its policy advice it had sought to improve the quality of public expenditures by shifting resources away from excessive military expenditure, as requested by the Platform for Action, towards public spending on infrastructure, basic education and health care. In implementing the Highly Indebted Poor Country initiative, IMF and the World Bank assisted countries in developing targets, including primary school enrolment rates for girls, in order to bring about irrevocable disbursement of debt relief.

46. A number of entities promoted gender mainstreaming in intergovernmental processes. The Development Policy and Planning Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which services the Committee for Development Policy, reported that it provided the Committee with analytical documents that incorporated gender perspectives and made use of data disaggregated by sex. The report of the Secretary-General on measures taken and progress achieved in follow-

up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/59/214) emphasized a quantitative increase in the references to women and gender equality in reports submitted to the various committees of the General Assembly, while noting there was still limited qualitative attention to gender perspectives. Many reports made only cursory reference to gender equality, and few reports contained solid gender analysis or recommendations on further action.

47. At the launch of the International Year of Microcredit 2005 in November 2004, the Office of the High Representatives for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island States and IFAD collaboratively organized a round table on "Empowering Women through Microcredit". During the eleventh session of UNCTAD in June 2004, the Conference organized a high-level round table on trade and gender.

D. Entities specialized in the promotion of gender equality

48. Catalytic support in the implementation of the Platform for Action has been provided directly both to Member States and to the efforts of United Nations entities by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNIFEM and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). This has included advocacy, advice and support, in particular on gender mainstreaming research, the provision of resources and development of pilot activities.

49. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, has promoted, facilitated and monitored gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system. The Special Adviser provided briefings and advice to senior management throughout the system to promote a greater understanding of gender mainstreaming and contribute to the development of capacity-building efforts, methodologies and tools. Briefing notes on gender mainstreaming in sector areas were prepared in collaboration with other entities. In collaboration with the Office on Drugs and Crime and the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Special Adviser prepared briefing notes on drugs and drug control and crime and crime prevention. The Office played a catalytic role in the area of women and peace and security and provided routine briefings and materials on gender mainstreaming to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General heading peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.

50. The Division for the Advancement of Women worked closely with Governments, its partners in the United Nations system and civil society in supporting the implementation of the Platform for Action, including through the gender mainstreaming strategy. To support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women organized expert group meetings to gather knowledge on emerging issues and trends on the themes of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission. As part of its technical cooperation programme, the Division provided capacity-building exercises on negotiation and mediation skills to 70 African women leaders to support their integration into formal peace negotiations. In collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination of the

Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Division organized workshops on strengthening the capacity of national machineries through effective use of ICT in Namibia and Senegal. In order to strengthen capacity of Governments and other actors in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Division organized regional training workshops and colloquiums in Vienna (1999), Bangkok (2002), Arusha (2003) and Nassau, the Bahamas (2004).

51. UNIFEM provided financial and technical assistance to programmes on women's human rights, political participation and economic security: contributing to the creation of a national statistical system in Mexico that monitors the implementation of national programmes for equal opportunities and the advancement of women; producing two editions of the *Progress of the World's Women* (2000 and 2002), and addressing the issue of women, war and peace and the gender dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals. To increase access to information on women and peace and security, UNIFEM created a web portal (WomenWarPeace.org), which acts as a centralized repository of information from a wide variety of sources, with links to reports and data from the United Nations system, academics, NGOs and media sources. The aim of portal is to track progress on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and to encourage researchers, policy makers, analysts and NGOs to routinely include, seek and contribute information and analysis on women, war and peace.

52. INSTRAW has promoted gender equality and women's advancement worldwide through research, training and the collection and dissemination of information, producing a paper on gender in conflict and conflict prevention that provides a framework for analysis of gender perspectives on peace and security. It has also provided information resources on gender aspects of conflict and peace on its web site. On the occasion of the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, INSTRAW compiled special collections of documents, set up web-based discussions and prepared discussion papers summarizing major policy questions, emerging issues and research needs. A collaborative research project on gender and ICT provided policy recommendations for bridging the gender digital divide to serve as input to the World Summit on the Information Society.

E. Inter-agency collaboration

53. Inter-agency collaboration on gender equality at the national, regional and global levels has continued and intensified since the Fourth World Conference on Women. The adoption of the Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming provided new impetus and shifted the emphasis of inter-agency activities to gender mainstreaming.

54. The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, which has 60 members, promotes collaboration, coordination and the regular exchange of information on gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. It focuses on strengthening capacities for gender mainstreaming within the entities of the United Nations system and promotes coherence in gender mainstreaming approaches and methodologies. The Network also provides support to intergovernmental processes,

in particular major United Nations global conferences and summits. The Network is chaired by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

55. Activities of the Network are carried out through task forces on specific themes, such as gender mainstreaming in relation to the Millennium Development Goals; ICT; peace and security; the common country assessments/UNDAFs; trade; water; and monitoring, evaluation and performance reporting. For example, at the occasion of the eleventh session of UNCTAD in June 2004, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Gender and Trade launched a publication entitled *Trade and Gender — Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Countries* in order to sensitize policy makers on the gender implications of trade. The Network held workshops to enhance competencies on gender mainstreaming during its annual meetings, including methodologies (2001); training and capacity-building (2002); global conferences (2003); and reporting and monitoring (2004).

56. The regional commissions played an important role in facilitating inter-agency collaboration at the regional level. For example, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific chairs the Thematic Working Group on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, which also includes membership of local regional non-governmental and civil society organizations. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean organizes an annual inter-agency meeting to coordinate work in the region.

57. Inter-agency collaboration has also been crucial in promoting gender equality and women's rights at the country level. Gender theme groups played an important role in some countries[5] in pooling resources, facilitating dialogue, developing common strategies and action plans, advocating and sensitizing policy makers, government officials and United Nations staff as well as in supporting the efforts of Governments.

III. Obstacles and challenges

58. United Nations entities have raised a number of obstacles and challenges to the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session.

59. Several entities identified the provision of effective training for staff at different levels in their organizations as a challenge. Obstacles included high turnover of staff, limited financial and human resources, as well as skepticism with regard to gender issues and lack of incentive to participate in training. WFP attempted to overcome this challenge by incorporating gender perspectives into corporate training programmes. To ensure capacity of all staff, UNDP made a gender training module mandatory for all staff.

60. Promoting the integration of gender analysis in programme design, planning and implementation was identified as another challenge. UN-Habitat addressed this issue by administrating a self-assessment questionnaire to establish how staff deal with gender issues in their daily work and to identify skills gaps. The World Bank emphasized that further capacity-building efforts were required in areas such as economic policy, rural development, social protection and infrastructure.

61. Underdeveloped reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms continued to be an obstacle in most United Nations entities. Challenges included the lack of

access to and use of sex-disaggregated data as well as gender specific information and indicators. FAO raised the need for monitoring and evaluation methods that combine traditional quantitative measures with qualitative indicators.

62. Lack of data disaggregated by sex as well as limited inclusion of existing data into mainstream statistical analysis has created a major challenge to implementation. The Economic Commission for Africa emphasized that data disaggregated by sex was particularly important in order to demonstrate the centrality of gender equality in national development strategies and to remove persistent misunderstandings and resistance to gender mainstreaming. ILO highlighted the need for better data and indicators on gender income gaps, decision-making and the informal economy.

63. Lack of accountability remains one of the major challenges to effective implementation. Few mechanisms exist within the United Nations system to ensure accountability.

64. Several entities emphasized that lack of financial resources remained a major constraint. Entities emphasized the gap between their programmes of work and the resources allocated to the regular budget. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) expressed its concern about lack of funding for gender sensitive activities and gender mainstreaming. Some entities, including those that relied entirely on extrabudgetary funding for their gender mainstreaming activities, highlighted the challenges in terms of long-term programming of activities and the need to establish predictable financial mechanisms. ILO called for extended gender budget lines for integrating gender perspectives into all mainstream projects and programmes.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

65. United Nations entities have made substantial progress in their efforts to support implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session. Most entities have developed gender policies and strategies and made institutional arrangements to facilitate implementation. Gender specialist resources, although limited in number and capacity, are in place in most entities of the United Nations system to promote and support implementation. Staff awareness raising has been carried out in the majority of organizations. Tools and methodologies have been developed and put into use. Despite these achievements, challenges remain in the implementation, including insufficient awareness and capacity of staff, underdeveloped monitoring and evaluation of activities, poor accountability, lack of data disaggregated by sex and inadequate resource allocation.

66. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to encourage United Nations entities, within their mandates, to take the following actions:

(a) Continue to support Governments, as well as civil society, in their efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and outcome of the special session;

(b) Strengthen gender-equality policy frameworks and further develop strategies and action plans with measurable goals and targets with time frames and indicators for monitoring and evaluation;

(c) Increase management commitment and establish mechanisms that hold staff and senior managers accountable for results, through incentives, rewards and sanctions, including in the performance appraisal system;

(d) Make gender training mandatory for all staff, ensure continuous learning about gender issues, including by integrating gender perspectives into mainstream corporate training programmes, and assess the impact of existing training programmes to improve their effectiveness;

(e) Build the capacity of staff to undertake gender analysis and require all staff to systematically utilize gender analysis in policy formulation as well as programmatic work;

(f) Increase attention to gender perspectives in medium-term plans and programme budgets and ensure sufficient attention to gender equality perspectives in planning and allocation of financial resources;

(g) Require reporting on progress made and challenges encountered in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action as an integrated part of existing monitoring and evaluation processes and carry out specific assessments as required;

(h) Increase exchange of experiences, good practices and lessons learned among entities of the United Nations system, as well as with Governments and civil society;

(i) Integrate gender perspectives into all reports before intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions and the Security Council;

(j) Ensure systematic attention to gender perspectives in critical areas, such as macroeconomics, international trade and investment, transport, taxation and finance.

67. The Commission on the Status of Women may also wish to recommend the following action with regard to inter-agency coordination mechanisms:

(a) The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality should continue its work in policy development, capacity-building, the development of methodologies and tools, the exchange of good practices, the development of effective monitoring and evaluation processes and the provision of practical support to its members in gender mainstreaming and report annually to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

(b) All inter-agency mechanisms should give attention to gender perspectives in their work.

Notes

[1] Other examples activities within United Nations entities are contained in previous reports of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1997/2, E/CN.6/1998/2, E/CN.6/1999/2, E/CN.6/2000/2, E/CN.6/2001/2, E/CN.6/2002/2, E/CN.6/2003/2, E/CN.6/2004/3), the Economic and Social Council (E/1997/66, E/1998/53, E/1999/54, E/2000/77, E/2001/78 and E/2004/59) and the General Assembly (A/51/322, A/52/281, A/53/308, A/54/264, A/55/293 and A/56/319).

[2] Collaborative partners include: the Center for Women's Global Leadership, FAO, the Global Campaign for Education, the Global Campaign for Microbicides, HelpAge, the International Center for Research on Women, the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS, the International Partnership for Microbicides, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

[3] http://www.eclac.org/mujer.

[4] http://www.irinnews.org.

[5] As of May 2003, there were 86 gender theme groups in 78 of 135 UNDP country offices, an increase over 58 in 1998.